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RUEHLC/AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE 0341
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 2266
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0244
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA 1304
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 2224
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 8812
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 5146
RUEHYN/AMEMBASSY SANAA 0433
RUEHSJ/AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE 0127
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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

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DEPT FOR OES, OES/ETC ROWENA WATSON, OES/OMC AMANDA JOHNSON MILLER,
AF/E, AND AF/EPS

POSTS FOR REO AND ESTH OFFICERS

ADDIS ABABA FOR REO LISA BRODEY

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SUBJECT: CITES COP 14: KENYA SEEKS USG SUPPORT ON IVORY TRADE BAN,
AGREES WITH LYNX, SAWFISH, CORAL LISTINGS

REFS: (A) NAIROBI 2216 (B) 05/14/07 WATSON-ALDRIDGE EMAIL

(C) STATE 57912 (D) NAIROBI 1188
(E) NAIROBI 1110

1. (U) Sensitive but Unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

2. (SBU) Summary: Kenya remains hopeful that the U.S. will side with it and Mali and oppose efforts by Namibia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and South Africa to get CITES approval for additional one-off sales of government-held stockpiles of ivory. Kenya agrees with U.S. proposals pertaining to species listings for lynx, sawfish, and coral. Its proposed 20-year ban on trade in raw and finished ivory, Kenyan Wildlife Service senior officials emphasize, is open to reexamination should African elephant numbers markedly increase and if the CITES elephant watch-group, MIKE (Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants), improves its surveillance of trade in ivory. However, given the significant amount of illegal ivory seized in the past two years, Kenya is highly skeptical of the resolve and ability of Japan and other prospective consuming nations to abide by the provisions of the original one-off sales. End Summary.

Expect Kenyan Cooperation on U.S. CITES Proposals

13. (SBU) Per ref C instructions, post presented USG CITES CoP14 proposals on bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), sawfish, and all species of pink and red corals to Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) officials. Post also provided USG views on the various proposals concerning possible trade in government-held stockpiles of legal ivory (ref B). In separate May 23 meetings with three senior KWS officials who will be members of Kenya's CITES delegation - Dr. Richard Bagine, Deputy Director for Biodiversity Research, Planning, and Monitoring; Dr. James G. Njogu, Head of Conventions, Biotechnology, and Information Management; and Patrick Omondi, Head of Species Conservation and Management - post learned that Kenya agrees with the U.S. proposals and, in fact, will be a co-sponsor of the sawfish proposal. (Note: Minister of Wildlife and Tourism Morris Dzoro and KWS Director Julius Kipng'etich will lead the Kenyan delegation to the June 3-15 CoP14 in The Hague. Noted elephant and rhino researcher Dr. Edmond Bradley Martin and "Save the Elephants" founder Dr. Iain Douglas-Hamilton will also be in attendance from Kenya. End Note.)

Opposition to Annual Ivory Quotas

14. (SBU) The Kenyan KWS officials were pleased to learn that the United States has reservations about the Botswana-Namibia CoP14 Proposition 4, which aims to establish annual quotas for the export of raw ivory from Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. They were especially gratified to hear that the United States shares

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Kenya's view that Zimbabwe does not merit inclusion because of its poor record of elephant protection. Kenya is also pleased that the United States believes it is "premature" for Botswana to be allowed to export live animals and leather goods for commercial purposes and sell 20,000 kilos of ivory (CoP14 Proposition 5). Kenya remains uneasy about CITES-sanctioned trade in ivory and is not convinced that it diminishes illegal trade; nevertheless, Kenya does not object to the pending one-off sale of ivory approved at CoP12 in 2002.

Elephants Are Our Heritage

15. (SBU) Dr. Bagine emphasized that for Kenya and the eleven other countries which support its proposed 20-year ban on trade in raw and semi-finished or finished ivory (ref A) elephants are part of their heritage. While acknowledging that elephant numbers in southern Africa are increasing, he bemoaned the precarious position of pachyderms throughout the rest of Africa because of poaching. Both he and Omondi pointed out that Senegal's meager numbers, for example, have dropped from 20 to 10 while Burundi no longer has any elephants.

MIKE's a Mouse

16. (SBU) All three argued that a 20-year moratorium, what Bagine repeatedly referred to as a "breather," on the ivory trade is needed to let African stocks recover and to give the CITES elephant watch-group, MIKE (Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants), more time to tabulate elephant numbers, oversee trade in legal raw and finished ivory, investigate illegal trade in ivory, and survey how well consuming nations, specifically Japan, are complying with CITES regulations. Dr. Bagine candidly admitted that Kenya is "dissatisfied with MIKE monitoring and reporting from southern Africa; we expected better MIKE enforcement of CITES regulations," while Omondi and Dr. Njogu complained that MIKE has not ensured that Japan is compliant. They bemoaned that Japan failed to report, as required, the confiscation of a huge amount of illegal ivory (3,000 kilograms) seized August 2006 in Osaka, to the CITES Standing

Committee.

17. (SBU) Omondi noted between August 2005 and August 2006 there were twelve major seizures of African ivory, comprising 23,460 kilograms and 91 un-weighed tusks, en route to the Far East. In the Kenyans' view, there has been an escalation of the illegal ivory trade since CITES agreed to the first one-off sale of government-held ivory. (Note: A report released last week by TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), gives credence to Kenya's fears that elephant poaching is on the rise.

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Globally, there is an average of 92 seizures per month. Large-scale ivory seizures of one ton or more have increased dramatically: from an annual average of 17 between 1989 and 1997 to 32 between 1998 and 2006. Kenya, alone, has had 212 elephants poached since CoP13 in October 2004. TRAFFIC reports 41,043 kilos of illegal ivory have been confiscated and an estimated 20,000 elephants killed since CoP13. It contends the illegal ivory trade is rampant in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon, and Nigeria. End Note.)

18. (SBU) Combating this revived illegal trade has taken a heavy toll in increased costs for foot and air surveillance and in heightened threats to park rangers (as reported in ref A, KWS lost three of its rangers in a shootout with Somali poachers on May 19). As Dr. Njogu summed it, "Opening up the ivory market means employment of more rangers, the deaths of more rangers, concentration on security rather than conservation, less community involvement, more patrol vehicles, and more degradation." Dr. Bagine bitterly complained that buyers from consuming countries (he specifically mentioned Germany, Japan, and China) are profiting from trade in illegal ivory - hiring and arming the poachers with sophisticated weapons, buying ivory from them at \$40 to \$60 a kilo, and selling it to unscrupulous artisans for as much as \$800 a kilo.

Elephant Poaching blamed on Asian Networks

19. (SBU) Omondi and Njogu contend Asian crime syndicates are most to blame for elephant poaching and joined with Bagine in arguing that governments must crack down on ivory peddlers and establish a computerized registration and tracking system of all legal ivory stockpiles in the world. This tracking system would be able to trace raw and worked ivory back to its country of origin. Until these actions are taken, Kenya believes there should be no trading in ivory. Thus, Dr. Njogu said Kenya remains hopeful that the United States will align with it, Mali, and several other "African Elephant Range Countries" in opposing efforts by Namibia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and South Africa to get CITES approval for additional one-off sales of government-held stockpiles of ivory. (Note: According to the "Elephant Trade Information System" (ETIS), Asians are noticeably involved in the illegal ivory trade. It reports Chinese citizens have been arrested, detained, or absconded in at least 126 significant ivory seizure cases in 22 African elephant range states. Aside from Mainland China, ETIS names Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, Japan, and Thailand as major markets. That said, 1,500 kilograms of illegal ivory were seized in France last November. End Note.)

110. (SBU) In addition, the Kenyans suggested that the moratorium would allow for the systematic transfer of excess elephants from large populations in southern Africa and Tanzania to replenish the herds in Senegal, Sierra Leone, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, and other western and central African countries. They predict that these

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countries would otherwise see their elephant populations disappear. Provided that elephant numbers do increase significantly during the course of the moratorium and MIKE does a better job of monitoring ivory stockpiles, the Kenyans said their government would not be opposed to amending the moratorium, if adopted. In response to U.S. concerns that the ban would preempt future proposals for trade and

thus violate CITES Article XV as expressed in ref B, the Kenyans politely retorted that the proposed moratorium would not prevent CITES members from submitting amendments at any time should circumstances change. They said Kenya is confident that the proposal is consistent with CITES and the prerogative of its members to submit amendments to existing restrictions.

Black Rhino Quota is Wrong

¶11. (SBU) Aside from elephants still being hunted for their tusks, rhinos, too, remain at risk for their horns. The Kenyans pointedly criticized Namibia for having convinced CITES to permit the taking of five black rhinos a year. Omondi charged that the Namibians produced wildly exaggerated numbers of black rhino to justify the annual hunting quota. The Kenyan delegation will seek to persuade the Parties to repeal the decision allowing for the quota, in part, because its member are highly skeptical that Namibia has at least 2,000 black rhinos. On its part, Kenya has only 539 black rhinos, which Omondi said are targets of well-armed poachers, especially from Somalia.

Ranneberger